

VIZ SIGNATURE

A touching, character-rich vision of  
an intriguing new world.

Living isn't easy in the lower levels of the Ring System, a floating civilization constructed when Earth was abandoned as a nature preserve. Sixteen-year-old Mitsu got a job washing windows for the wealthy residents of the upper levels after his father, also a window washer, fell from his tether. Now Mitsu's been asked to man an illegal craft that's descending to the surface of the earth. But it seems everyone in this divided society has a secret agenda. Mitsu alone must decide if he's ready to take the journey of a lifetime.

# saturn apartments

IKKI saturn apartments 9 Hisae Iwaoka

Hisae  
Iwaoka

[www.sigikki.com](http://www.sigikki.com)

Hisae Iwaoka is the creator of several one-shot manga, including *Hana Boro* (Flower Cookies) and *Shiroi Kumo* (White Clouds), both of which were serialized in *IKKI* magazine. Her art installations have been displayed internationally in the group show "Tokyo Girls Bravo," curated by Takashi Murakami. *Saturn Apartments* is her most recent series.

saturn  
apartments 6  
HISAE IWAOKA



# saturn apartments 6

FLOOR 45. THE GUIDING THREAD 003

FLOOR 46. THE SHIP YOU WILL RIDE 023

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floor 45: the guiding thread

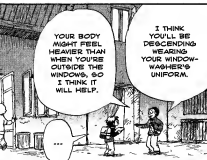
OH?

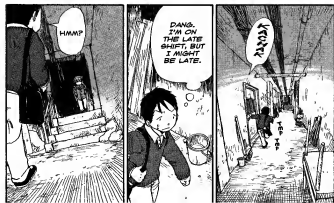


















HA HA  
HA.

...WHEN I  
COULDN'T  
MANAGE.



OH?



WELL, I WAS  
A LITTLE  
SURPRISED.

...



NAKOTO,  
WHY'D YOU  
DECIDE  
TO COME  
TODAY?

YOU  
DIDN'T  
WANT  
ME  
TO?

I SHOULD  
GO  
HOME.



YOU'RE  
THE  
FIRST TO  
SHOW UP.

...





I THINK  
YOU'RE ALL  
WORKING  
WELL AS  
A GROUP.



HEY, WHAT  
DO YOU  
THINK  
ABOUT HOW  
THE WINDOW  
WASHERS  
ARE DOING  
NOW?



HE'S ACTUALLY  
PRETTY SHARP  
AND HE WORKS  
HARD. HASN'T HE  
BECOME LIKE  
AKI, THE ONE  
WHO FIRES  
EVERYONE UP?

IS IT  
THANKS  
TO  
MITSU?



IT'S  
'CAUSE  
MITSU'S  
DOING  
THE BEST  
HE CAN.



HMM...



NO, I'M NOT  
COMPARING.

YOU COM-  
PARING  
THE TWO?









WHAT?

THE FACT THAT  
SOMEONE LIKE  
YOU GETS TO  
STAND ON THE  
OUTSIDE  
PISSES ME  
OFF.



WHAT  
DO YOU  
KNOW?

YOU'RE  
MORE  
BORING  
THAN ME.



SHUT UP...  
I DON'T  
NEED TO  
TALK WITH  
A BORING  
WOMAN.

HEY, MAKOTO,  
I DON'T NEED  
YOU LECTURING  
ME.



I'LL NEVER  
FORGIVE YOU IF  
YOU SAY SOME-  
THING LIKE THAT  
IN FRONT OF  
MR. KAGEYAMA  
OR TAMACHI.

LISTEN, YOU'RE  
JUST ASSUMING  
WHAT THE  
FUTURE WILL  
BE LIKE, AND  
YOU'VE ALREADY  
GIVEN UP.













...BUT I DIDN'T  
THINK YOU  
SHOULD BE  
SAYING WHAT  
YOU DID IN  
FRONT OF  
MITSU EITHER.

I KNOW  
YOU'RE NOT  
THE CARE-  
FREE TYPE...



SORRY,  
SORRY.

I WAS  
DOWN FOR  
A SEC,  
BUT THAT'S  
BECAUSE  
YOU WERE  
RIGHT.

Ahaha



NO.



IF I  
COMPLAIN,  
BOTH YOU  
AND  
MAKOTO  
WILL HATE  
ME.

WELL,  
I MADE  
MAKOTO  
ANGRY.



WHOA,  
OKAY.

MITSUUU!  
LET'S GO  
HOME  
TOGETHER.

That  
girl!

40 P

I told  
it back  
you are  
crazy!







floor 46: the ship you will ride









AH, YULI-DA!  
WELCOME HOME.

MAKIE,  
YOU'RE  
HERE.



THEN YOU  
SLEEP IN  
YOUR BED  
NOW.

I WONDER  
HOW I GOT  
HOME. IT  
WAS LIKE  
A DREAM.



AM I  
TIRED?



COME ON,  
DON'T  
COLLAPSE  
ON THE  
FLOOR.

F  
L  
O  
P



IT'S WONDERFUL  
THAT A LOWER-  
LEVEL RESIDENT  
CAN WORK AT A  
RESEARCH LAB.

IT'S A GOOD  
OPPORTUNITY.

THAT'S  
GREAT!



YEAH, THE  
UNIVERSITY'S  
PARTICIPATING,  
AND I'LL BE  
ABLE TO JOIN  
THE TEAM.

SO, HOW'S THE  
GOVERNMENT'S  
BIG PROJECT?





YOU  
AND  
ME...

WE'LL GO  
FIRST AND  
MAKE A NEW  
WORLD FOR  
THOSE  
WHO'LL  
FOLLOW US.

A FRESH  
NEW LAND  
WHERE  
THERE'S NO  
UPPER OR  
LOWER  
LEVELS...  
YES!

I HOPE WE  
CAN LIVE ON  
THE SURFACE  
SOMEDAY.

HEY,  
YULALAI.

YEAH...  
THAT'LL BE  
WONDERFUL....

...AND  
THE THIRD  
PERSON  
TO BE!

But  
Makie...

Oh, no  
he was  
tired.

ZZZ...

WHAT?  
YOU'RE  
FROM THE  
LOWER  
LEVELS?

The most  
wonderful  
thing is the  
time the two  
of us spend  
together.



WELL... BUT IF  
I DON'T DO MY  
BEST NOW, I  
MAY BE TAKEN  
OFF THE  
PROJECT...

YOU SPENT  
A WEEK AT  
THE LAB,  
BUT YOU  
HAVEN'T  
CHANGED  
AT ALL...

OH? YOU  
HAVEN'T  
CHANGED?

WELL...  
I'VE BEEN  
BUSY...

WHAT  
IS IT?

I HAVE GOOD  
NEWS FOR  
YOU, BUT I'M  
NOT GONNA  
TELL YOU.

IF YOU CAN'T  
KEEP YOUR  
PROMISES, YOUR  
WORK WILL BE  
AFFECTED TOO.

...THAT  
YOU'D  
CHANGE  
EVERY DAY  
AND EAT  
YOUR  
HEALS.

BUT YOU  
PROMISED  
ME...

...  
YES.

I'M  
SORRY.

We were  
finally  
blessed  
with a  
baby.



WHY  
WON'T  
THEY  
COME...



DAMNIT.

DAMNIT.



SHE GOT MORE  
AND MORE  
PALE, SO I  
REQUESTED AN  
AMBULANCE,  
BUT NO ONE  
CAME.

SHE HAD  
CRAMPS  
DURING THE  
NIGHT AND  
SHE'S  
BLEEDING....



I'M  
COLD  
---

YULIDAI  
---



WHISP  
YES.

WHISP  
HAVE THAT  
UPPER-LEVEL  
RESIDENT GO  
FIRST.

WHISP  
PLEASE  
WAIT A  
LITTLE  
WHILE  
LONGER.

WHISP  
SHE  
STILL  
SEEMS  
ALL  
RIGHT.



YOU DON'T  
EVEN HAVE  
AN APPOINT-  
MENT.

THEN  
PLEASE  
WAIT  
HERE.

Yes, we  
waited.  
How  
long  
did we  
wait?

WE'VE KEPT  
YOU WAITING.

GOOD, THE  
CHAIRMAN  
OF THAT  
COMPANY IS  
GOING TO  
SURVIVE.

There are so  
many people,  
but they  
pretend not  
to see us.

THINGS  
ARE  
FINE  
HERE  
TOO.

US  
TOO.

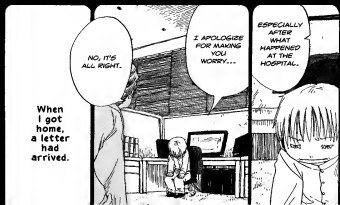
She's  
asleep  
now.

My wife  
almost died  
due to  
hemorrhagic  
shock.

...had  
already  
lost its  
life.

The  
baby...













MR. NISHIMARU,  
IT'S TIME FOR  
YOU TO GO.



WHAT DO  
WE MEAN?



COME GET  
YOUR  
WIFE.

So Makie  
isn't  
Makie  
anymore?

A fake  
sky...



WHAT CAN  
I DO HERE  
ALL BY  
MYSELF....



THE UPPER  
LEVELS. THE  
LOWER  
LEVELS. WHO  
PREPARED  
THESE  
RECEPTACLES?

No...  
I am not  
alone...





MAKIE...



THANK  
YOU, AS  
ALWAYS.



I REMEMBERED  
MANY THINGS  
ON MY WAY  
HERE TODAY.



SHE'S FINE,  
AS ALWAYS.



BUT THEY  
ARE THINGS  
THAT ARE  
ALWAYS ON  
MY MIND.



WHAT DID I  
DO WRONG?  
WHAT DID  
MAKIE DO  
WRONG?

OUR  
CHILD  
WASN'T  
EVEN  
BORN!



YOU HAD  
BEAUTIFUL  
BLACK HAIR.

IT WASN'T  
THAT LONG  
AGO, BUT...

HA  
HA  
HA.



WE MUST  
STAND UP  
FOR  
OURSELVES.

WHAT ARE  
THOSE  
UPPER-LEVEL  
GUYS DOING?  
I CAN'T  
BELIEVE THAT  
THERE'S  
NOTHING  
GOING ON.



THE  
FUTURE  
IS FULL  
OF  
HOPE.

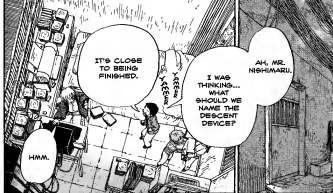


AND I'LL  
MAKE  
EVERYONE  
OPEN THEIR  
EYES  
BEFORE  
THAT. SO  
WAIT FOR  
ME.



AH...  
MAKIE.

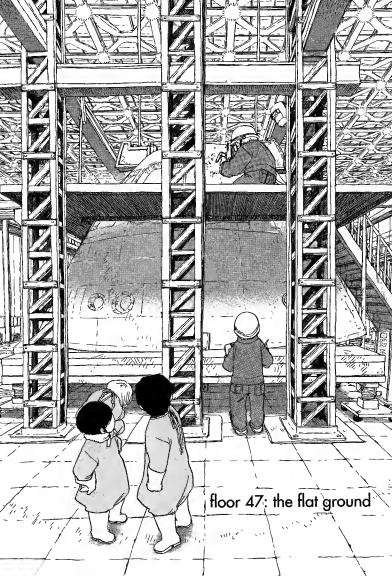
DON'T WORRY.  
I'LL CHANGE  
MY CLOTHES  
AND DESCEND  
TO THE  
SURFACE.



...was for  
you two.



The ship I'm  
building...

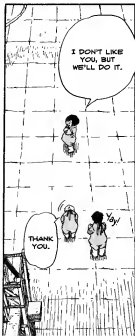


floor 47: the flat ground





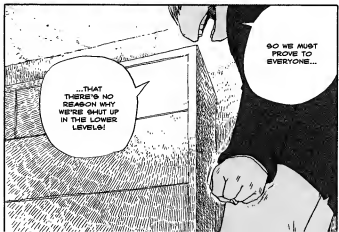


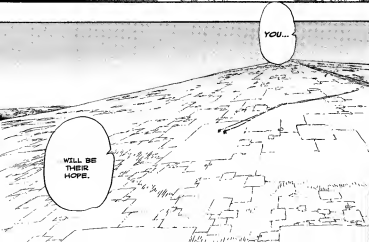




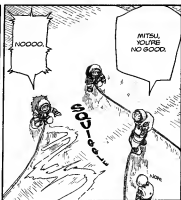
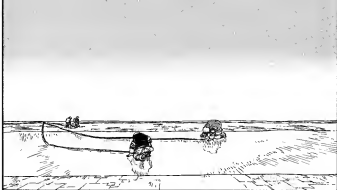


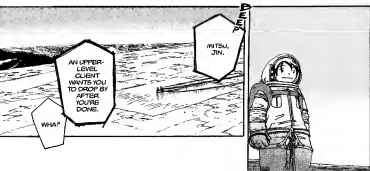


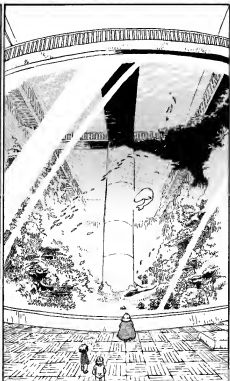
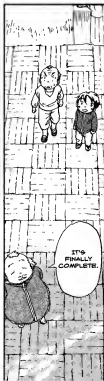


















...I WANT TO  
HIRE YOU  
PARTLY  
BECAUSE  
YOU TALK  
THAT WAY!



I'M SORRY  
IF I'VE  
HURT YOUR  
FEELINGS...

...BUT...



...I REALLY  
DO ENJOY  
BEING  
INVOLVED  
WITH YOU  
TWO.

BUT...



YOU'LL  
STEER MY  
COMPANY  
IN A GOOD  
DIRECTION.

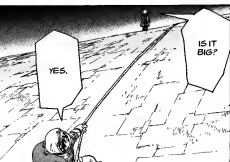
KEEP  
GOING



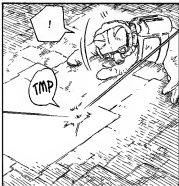
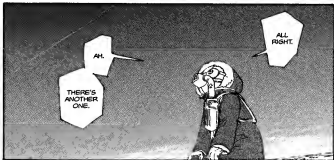
NO ONE  
CAN GO  
OUTSIDE.

THE UPPER  
AND LOWER  
LEVELS ARE  
ACTUALLY  
NOT THAT  
DIFFERENT.



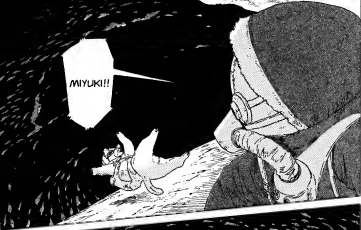




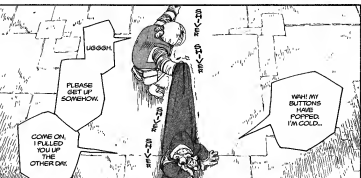
















"I'LL ACCEPT YOU."



"BUT NOW YOU'RE  
ALREADY WORKING  
ALONGSIDE US."



"THAT,  
YOU'VE  
IMPROVED  
A WHOLE  
LOT."

"HE OFTEN  
TALKS  
ABOUT  
WITSU."



"DON'T  
RUSH  
THINGS."



"YOU TWO HAVE  
YOUR DREAMS."





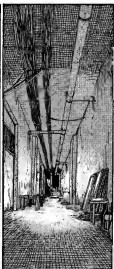


Now  
I have  
faith in  
myself.

And I...

...can  
give  
hope to  
others  
as well.







IT'S ABOUT  
THAT GIRL I  
USED TO GO  
OUT WITH.

UM, MY  
PARENTS  
SENT ME  
A LETTER.



SOHTA,  
MAY I  
COME  
IN?



THE WAY  
HE IS,  
HE'LL  
PROBABLY  
HAVE A  
DIFFERENT  
TAKE  
ON IT.

SHOULD I  
TALK TO  
SOHTA?



SILENCE

EH?

THE  
LETTER  
SAYS THAT  
SHE'S  
STILL  
WAITING  
FOR ME.



HOW MANY  
PEOPLE  
ARE  
LIVING IN  
SOHTA'S  
ROOM?



WHO  
ARE  
THEY?

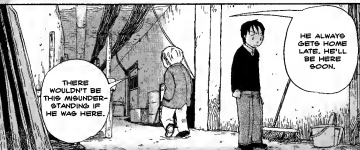


WAH!

HUP!

SHORT









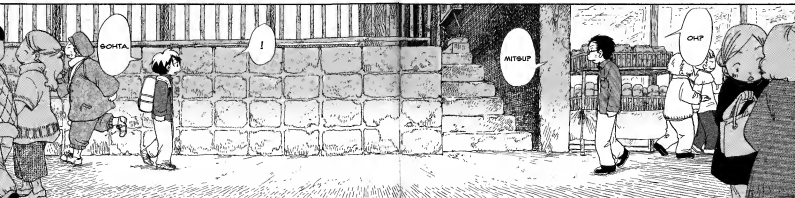
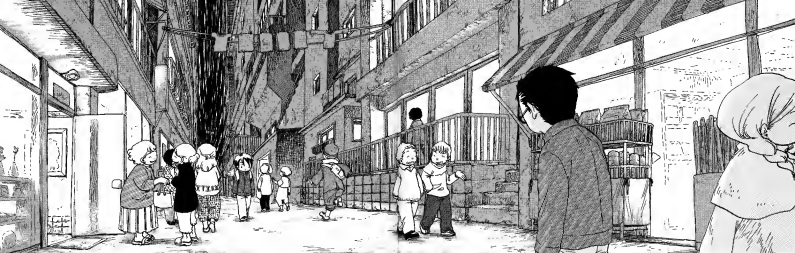




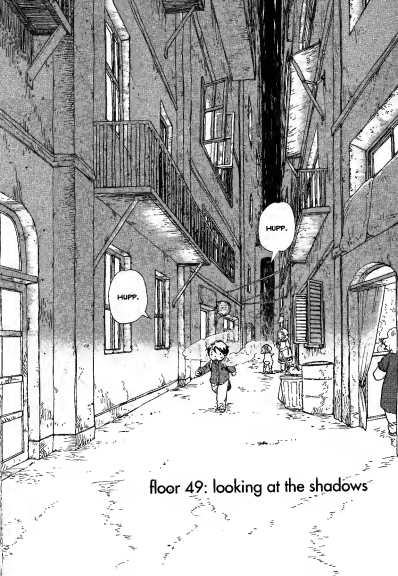












floor 49: looking at the shadows



WE LOST HIM ON THE WAY.



OH? WHERE'S MITSU?



HUPP.

HUPP.



IT'S GOOD HE'S PUSHING HIMSELF, BUT WHAT'S HE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

WHAT THE HECK? IS HE TRAINING FOR SOMETHING?



WE'LL WRITE SOFTWARE SO YOU CAN STEER IT EASILY.

IT'S ALMOST BUILT.



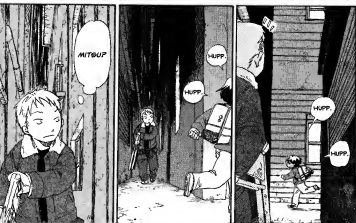
UH, IT'S CALLED ARGO 1.

THE DESCENT DEVICE...



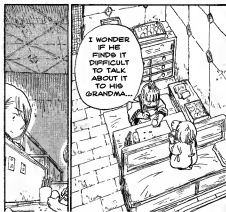


YES.







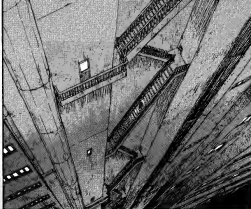








THE  
ELEVATOR  
ISN'T  
WORKING...



...MITSU.

TAMACHI.

OH?



SEE  
YOU.

...



YOU NEED  
ENDURANCE  
TO WASH  
THE  
WINDOWS.

GOOD  
FOR  
YOU.



I  
THOUGHT  
I'D TRAIN  
MYSELF.

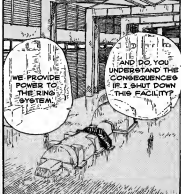
WHY ARE  
YOU  
ALWAYS  
RUNNING  
THESE  
DAYS?

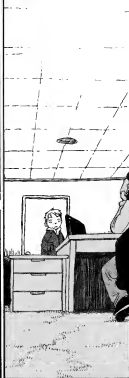




















...SO YOU  
MUST BE  
RETURNING TO  
THE JOB YOU  
LOVE AS A  
WINDOW  
WASHER.

BUT  
YOU'RE  
QUITTING...

That  
place  
there...

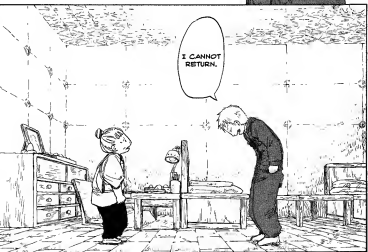
Yes.

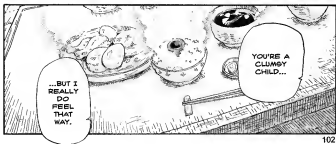


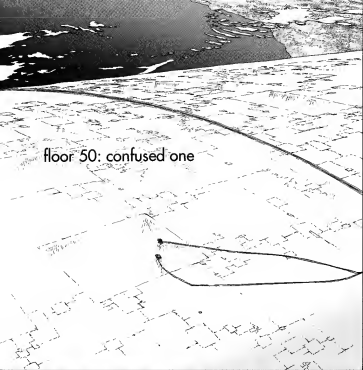
Aki...





















...I WORK FOR  
THE PUBLIC  
PEACE  
BUREAU. I'LL  
INVESTIGATE  
IF I'M  
SUSPICIOUS.

EVEN IF I  
AM JUNIOR  
STAFF AND  
A LOWER-  
LEVEL  
RESIDENT...



YOU WORK FOR  
THE PUBLIC  
PEACE BUREAU,  
YET YOU'RE  
AWARE OF YOUR  
STATUS AS A  
LOWER-LEVEL  
RESIDENT.

OHO...



I was  
in that  
position  
once  
too.

WHAT CAN  
YOU DO,  
WHEN YOU'RE  
ONLY BEING  
USED BY THE  
UPPER-LEVEL  
RESIDENTS?

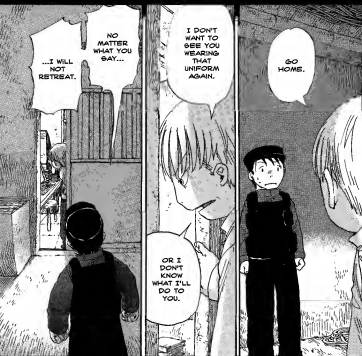
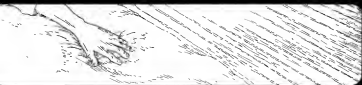


THAT  
WAS  
ALL...

You  
can't do  
anything  
if you  
stay  
here.

WE'RE JUST  
LIVING OUR  
LIVES THE  
BEST WE CAN,  
DOING THE  
WORK WE WANT  
TO DO...

















...cannot  
return.









MEOW

AH,  
MIYUKI'S  
CUTE.



GLARE

WAH.



THE  
OBSESSIVE  
TYPE.

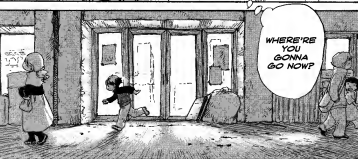
YOU TWO  
BOTH  
SEEM  
STUBBORN.



SHE'S  
REALLY  
GOTTEN  
USED TO  
HIM.



TAMACHI.



WHERE'RE  
YOU  
GONNA  
GO NOW?



...quietly  
wash  
window  
after  
window.

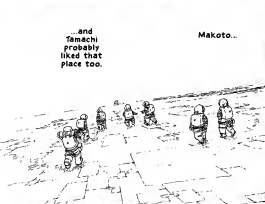
I just...



WHY DO  
I LIKE  
WASHING  
WINDOWS?



HUP  
HUP



...and  
Tamachi  
probably  
liked that  
place too.

Makoto...



BUT I  
LIKE  
THAT  
PLACE.



Actually...

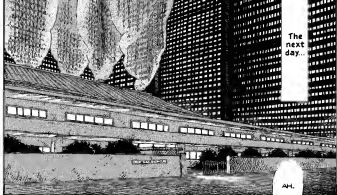
Do I only  
like that  
place?

Hey.

That's  
why I  
don't  
want to  
leave it.

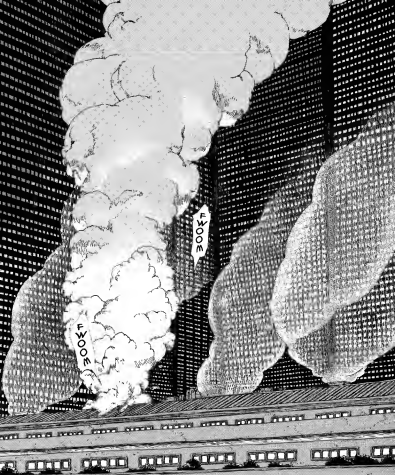
Dad...

I like  
the  
*people*  
at that  
place.









floor 51: smoke









HEY.

IS ANYONE  
HERE?

ZOE

GET  
OUT!



...but  
now it's  
just an  
excuse

I was going  
to tell the  
government  
office  
about the  
situation in  
the power  
plant after  
I quit...



HUH?



TODAY IT  
LOOKS  
STRANGE.

USUALLY  
IT'S JUST  
STEAM.



GEE,  
THERE'S  
MORE  
SMOKE  
THAN  
USUAL.

OH  
MY.



DOES  
IT?

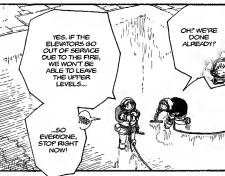
DOESN'T  
THE POWER  
PLANT LOOK  
DIFFERENT?



YES.



A FIRE ON  
THE LOWER  
LEVELS?

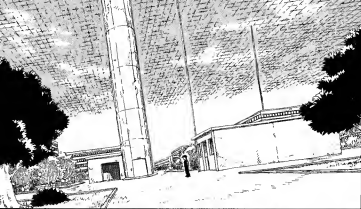


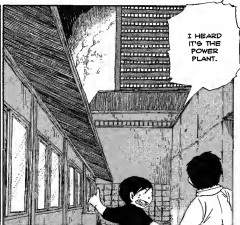
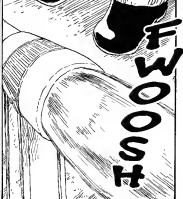
OH? WE'RE  
DONE  
ALREADY?

...SO  
EVERYONE,  
STOP RIGHT  
NOW!

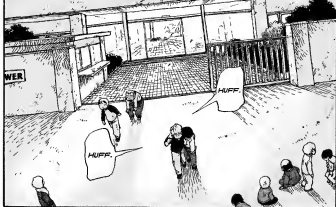










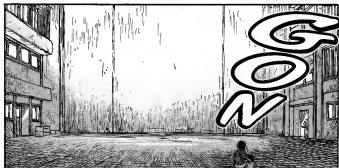
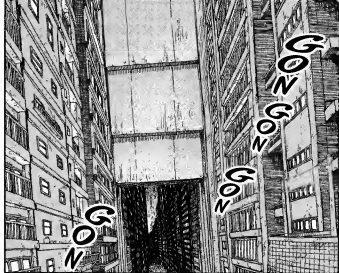




...to save  
anyone?

Aki.  
Will I be  
able...

HEY.









BEEEEEEPP...

A LARGE  
FIRE IS  
BURNING IN  
THE LOWER  
LEVELS.

...

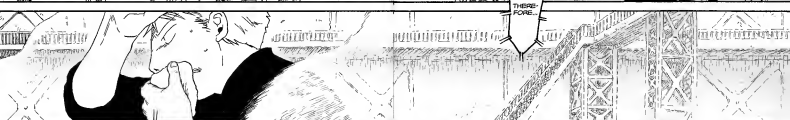


BUILDINGS MAY  
COLLAPSE.  
POISONOUS  
GAS MAY BE  
EMITTED.

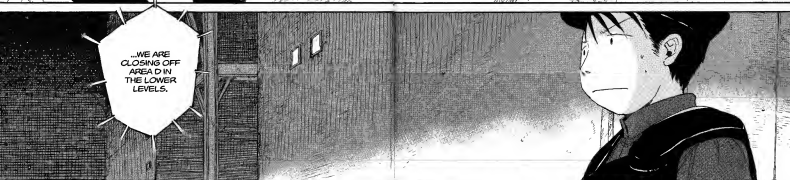
I  
REPEAT.



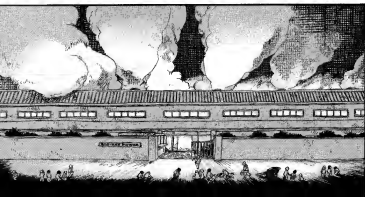
THESE  
FORE...



...WE ARE  
CLOSING OFF  
AREA D IN  
THE LOWER  
LEVELS.











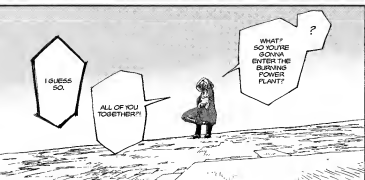
floor 52: confusion

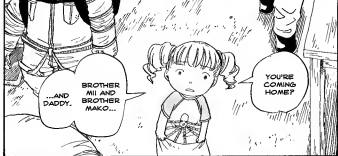
TAMACHI  
MIGHT STILL  
BE INSIDE  
THE BURNING  
BUILDING.

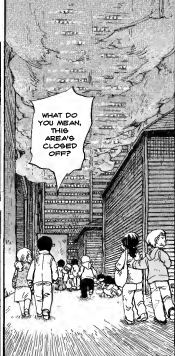
EVERYONE  
COME TO  
THE POWER  
PLANT AND  
HELP.













...IS  
GOING  
TO  
HAPPEN  
HERE?



HOW  
COULD  
YOU.

WHAT...

HEY.



BOOM!

Bring  
some  
water!

Hurry



YOU KNOW  
WHERE  
TAMACHI  
MIGHT BE?

GOOD  
YOU'RE  
HERE.

MR.  
KASEYAMA?!  
AND...ALL  
THE WINDOW  
WASHERS?



SOHTAI!

OH  
NO...



ACTUALLY,  
TAMACHI  
TOLD THE  
INJURED  
ONES TO  
GO.



WHAT  
TAMACHI  
IS STILL  
INSIDE?

YEAH,  
ACCORDING  
TO THE  
GUYS WHO  
FLED  
FIRST.



THEY ONLY  
INHALED  
SOME  
SMOKE, SO  
NO ONE'S  
HURT.



HE WAS  
PROBABLY  
ABLE TO ACT  
QUICKLY  
BECAUSE HE  
KNEW ABOUT  
THE DANGER.

TAMACHI WAS  
LOOKING FOR  
DANGEROUS  
SPOTS IN THE  
FACILITY.



I'LL SEND  
THE FACILITY  
BLUEPRINTS  
AND THE DATA  
CONCERNING  
THE  
DANGEROUS  
SPOTS TO  
THE GUILD  
HEADQUARTERS,  
SO PLEASE GET  
IT FROM THEM.



TAMACHI'S  
DATA...

...SHOULD  
STILL BE  
IN THE  
MANAGE-  
MENT  
SECTION.



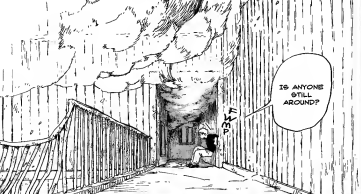
THE PLANT  
CHIEF...OR  
THE MANAGE-  
MENT  
SECTION  
CHIEF...

EITHER  
OF  
THEM  
HERE?

THE  
SECTION  
CHIEF IS  
HERE.







IS ANYONE  
STILL  
AROUND?



HUFF...

AAAAAAAA-

HUFF...



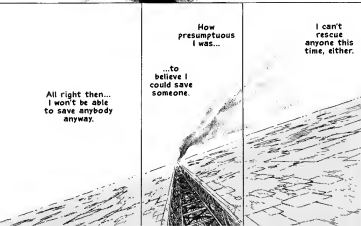
AKL

All right then...  
I won't be able  
to save anybody  
anyway.

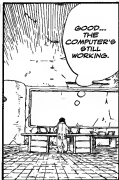
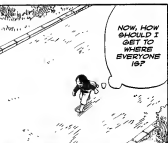
How  
presumptuous  
I was...

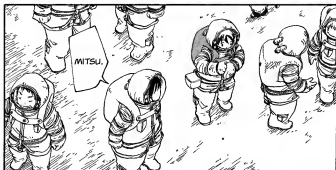
...to  
believe I  
could save  
someone.

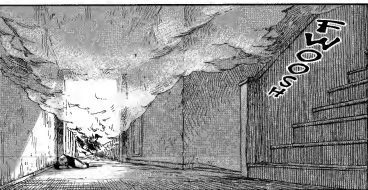
I can't  
rescue  
anyone this  
time, either.













YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR US LOWER-LEVEL RESIDENTS.

WAH.

KICK



YOU ALWAYS GIVE PREFERENCE TO THE UPPER LEVELS.

HOW DARE YOU.



PUBLIC PEACE BUREAU, GET OUT OF HERE.

LET US THROUGH!



YOU'RE A LOWER-LEVEL RESIDENT. TALK TO THEM.

WHA.

HUHP?



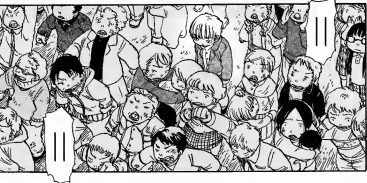
SHUT UP. MOVE AWAY.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?



YOU'RE JUST DOING IT FOR THE MONEY.

HOW COULD YOU DO THIS, WHEN YOU'RE A LOWER-LEVEL RESIDENT TOO!







...in order  
to provide  
equal  
treatment  
for the  
upper and  
lower  
levels.

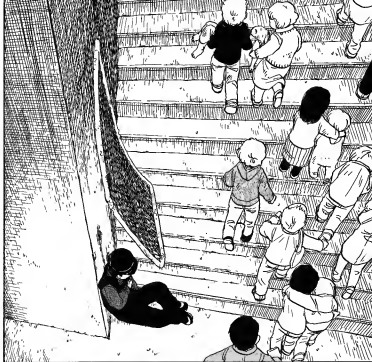


I wanted  
to work  
for the  
Public  
Peace  
Bureau...











Somebody  
tell her...

Anybody...

WAH

floor 53: light and shadow



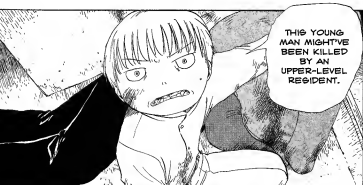
I was  
happy  
she was  
really  
waiting  
for me.

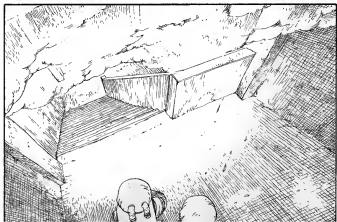
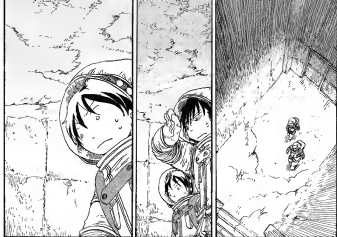




























I got  
him...

GRAB



I can  
rescue  
you!

I'll  
rescue  
you.



This  
time  
I'll...!

AKI.



I'LL GET UP BY MYSELF.

I'LL STAND OUTSIDE THE WINDOWS ONCE MORE.

I WON'T DEPEND ON ANYBODY.



UH.

WHA.



The one who was falling... was me?

I'm falling.



Tamao.

YOU SHOULD LEARN TO LET YOUR BURDENS DOWN SOME-TIMES.



Then I'll keep shouldering them.

I can't let them down.



QUEST  
H-H-H-H



No.

No!

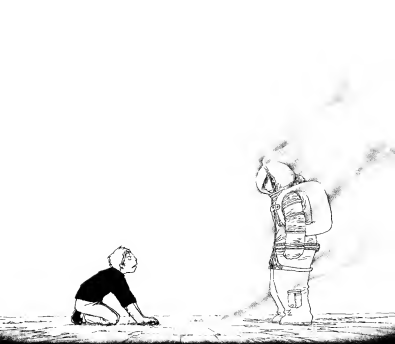


I see. I should've been the one who fell.

Now...

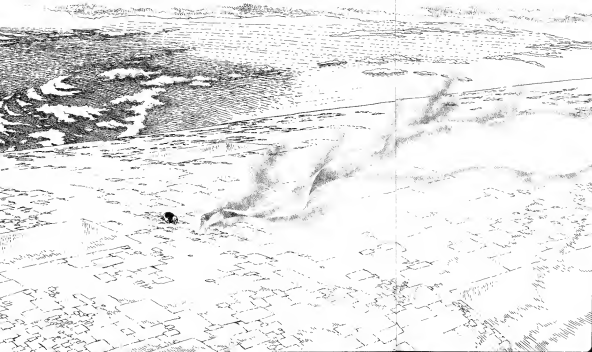






Aki...







PLEASE  
WAKE  
UP!

WHY'RE  
YOU  
ASLEEP  
?!



TAMACHI!

TAMACHI!



YOU CAME  
BACK TO  
RESCUE  
PEOPLE,  
BUT YOU'VE  
COLLAPSED  
YOURSELF.

DON'T  
LET THE  
SMOKE  
GET YOU.

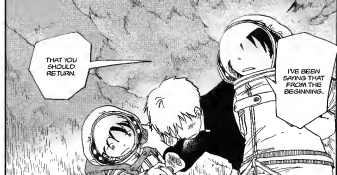


AH,  
MAKOTO!  
HE SEEMS  
ALL RIGHT.

CAN YOU  
STAND UP?  
YOU WALK BY  
YOURSELF.









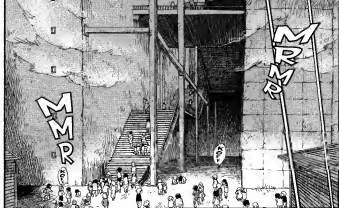
You hear that, Dad?



...Dad...

Smile...

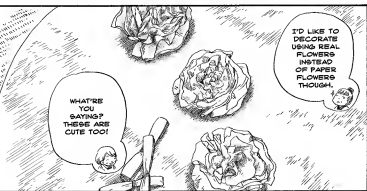








in the loft





## THE END OF SATURN APARTMENTS 6

### In the Next Volume

The Ring System, a structure constructed in space when Earth was abandoned as an environmental preserve, contains a society divided by money and status. Mitsu, a sixteen-year-old lower-level window washer whose father was killed when he fell from the surface of the Ring, struggles to define his role in this stifling and segregated civilization. Unsafe living conditions and unrest among the residents trouble the lower level, but Mitsu and his colleagues also struggle with loneliness and thwarted ambitions. In the final volume of *Saturn Apartments*, Mitsu must decide whether he will descend to the surface of the earth in an experimental device and attempt to change the fate of the Ring System forever.

**saturn**  
apartments





